

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIMA 07344 052033Z

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INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

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AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 7344

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PE

SUBJECT: GOP APPOINTMENTS; RICHTER TO COMMAND THIRD
MILITARY REGION

1. ON SEPTEMBER 3, NEWLY-APPOINTED MINES MINISTER LUIS LA VERA VELARDE TOLD REPORTERS THAT HIS FORMER POSITION AS THIRD MILITARY REGION COMMANDER WILL BE FILLED BY EX-INTERIOR MINISTER PEDRO RICHTER PRADA. MEANWHILE, THE GOP HAS DESIGNATED REAR ADMIRAL GUILLERMO VILLA PAZOS AS NAVY CHIEF OF STAFF; BRIG. GEN JOSE VILLALOBOS VIGIL AS DIRECTOR SUPERIOR OF THE CENTRAL INFORMATION OFFICE (OCI), DIRECTLY UNDER MAJ. GEN. LEONIDAS RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA; AND MAJ. GEN. JORGE BARANDIARAN AS PRESIDENT OF THE JOINT COMMAND.

2. ALSO, THE EMBASSY HAS HEARD RUMORS OSWALDO DE RIVERO MAY BE APPOINTED SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY, AND RETIRED ADMIRAL LUIS BARGAS CABALLERO MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR AMBASSADORSHIP TO THE U.S.

3. COMMENT: RICHTER'S APPOINTMENT COMES AS NO SURPRISE AND SHOULD NOT BE VIEWED AS A DEMOTION. A POWERFUL AND CAPABLE
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PAGE 02 LIMA 07344 052033Z

OFFICE, RICHTER ASSUMES A MAJOR COMMAND. WITH A RETIREMENT

DATE OF FEBRUARY 1981, HE MAY YET HAVE OTHER ROLES TO PLAY IN THE GOP.

4. REAR ADMIRAL VILLA PAZONS IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN PICKED FOR THE NUMBER TWO NAVY SLOT BY HIS FELLOW ADMIRALS, WHO WERE REQUESTED TO SELECT THEIR PREFERENCE BY NAVY MINISTER PARODI. HE IS IN ANY CASE NEXT SENIOR TO PARODI AND MAY HAVE BEEN PARODI'S CHOICE AS WELL. VILLA ATTENDED U.S. NAVY WAR COLLEGE (1964) AND IS DEFINITELY NOT ANTI-AMERICAN.

5. WHILE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE WAR MINISTRY, BRIG. GEN. JOSE VILLALOBOS WAS A KEY MORALES BERMUDEZ SUBORDINATE AND SERVED AS HIS SPOKESMAN DURING THE EARLY STAGES OF THE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT. HE IS CONSIDERED A MODERATE AND WELL-DISPOSED TOWARD THE U.S. THERE IS SPECULATION THAT VILLALOBOS MAY REPLACE CAMPOS QUESADA AS INTERIOR MINISTER WHEN CAMPOS RETIRES ON FEBRUARY 1, 1976.

6. WE UNDERSTAND THAT UNDER VILLALOBOS'S DIRECTION OCI WILL ASSUME RESPONSIBILITIES FORMERLY HELD BY PRESS SECRETARY AUGUSTO ZIMMERMANN. IN THIS REGARD, ZIMMERMANN, WHO APPARENTLY TURNED ON VELASCO IN TIME TO FIND AT LEAST TEMPORARY SHELTER IN THE NEW REGIME, WILL STAY ON AS OIC ADVISOR.

7. BARANDIARAN WILL RETIRE FEBRUARY 1, 1976, AS WILL PRIME MINISTER VARGAS PRIETO. THE WAY MAY THEN BECOME CLEAR FOR JORGE FERNANDEZ MALDONADO, NOW ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF AND NEXT SENIOR ARMY OFFICER, TO BECOME PRIME MINISTER.

8. OSWALDO DE RIVERO IS KNOWN AS AN IDEOLOGUE AND MILITANT THIRD WORLDER. IF INDEED HE BECOMES THE PRESIDENT'S SECRETARY GENERAL, HE WILL PROBABLY BE NO MORE HELPFUL TO THE U.S. THAN HE HAS BEEN HERETOFORE IN THE FONOFF.

9. SHOULD VARGAS CABALLERO BECOME AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S., IT WILL BE INTERPRETED AS YET ANOTHER VICTORY FOR THE PERUVIAN NAVY. AS NAVY MINISTER, VARGAS LED THE NAVY'S ABORTIVE PROTEST OF MAY 1974 AND WAS PROMPTLY OUSTED BY VELASCO. HIS REPLACEMENT, VICE ADMIRAL JOSE ARCE LARCO, WAS LATER MADE AMBASSADOR TO

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LIMA 07344 052033Z

THE U.S. ANOTHER AND PERHAPS MORE RELIABLE SOURCE, HOWEVER, SAYS THAT THE WASHINGTON AMBASSADOR WILL BE A CIVILIAN, NOT AN ACTIVE OR RETIRED MILITARY OFFICER. THIS SOURCE ALSO REPORTS THAT FONOFF SECRETARY GARCIA BEDOYA MAY REPLACE DE LA FLOR AS FONMIN.
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